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SPORTS IN THE YEAR AHEAD

All four of our pro teams look better. 7-8

Philly wellness gurus offer tips on keeping those New Year's resolutions. 6

Philly leaders look ahead to the new year. 4

A FRESH START

New Year's resolutions are piled high as 2018 arrives with frigid temperatures. 6

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FIVE OF THE BIGGEST MOMENTS TO WATCH FOR IN 2018

MORGAN ROUSSEAU, MANAGING EDITOR

Take a breath and enjoy a nice little lull in the wake of the 2017 holiday season, because 2018 is gearing up to be a year like no other. It's a new year, and hopefully, a new and better you. But will the U.S. be a new and better nation? Here are five big stories to watch in 2018.

NET NEUTRALITY DECISION FALLOUT

1 The U.S. Federal Communications Commission voted on Dec. 14 along party lines to repeal landmark 2015 rules aimed at ensuring a free and open internet, setting up a court fight over a move that could recast the digital landscape. The approval of FCC Chairman Ajit Pai's proposal in a 3-2 vote marked a victory for internet service providers such as AT&T Inc., Comcast Corp. and

Verizon Communications Inc. and hands them power over what content consumers can access. Consumers are unlikely to see immediate changes, though internet service providers say they may engage in paid prioritization, also known as "internet fast lanes."

#MeToo MOMENTUM, WOMEN'S MARCH

2 On Jan. 21, on the heels of the mega #MeToo movement, the Women's March will storm Las Vegas with Power to the Polls, an event that organizers hope to use to empower progressives in the 2018 midterm elections, capitalizing on the energy from some 2017 election victories.

5 MOMENTS TO WATCH

ANOTHER ROYAL WEDDING

3 The wedding of Britain's Prince Harry and his fiancee Meghan Markle will take place on May 19, at St. George's Chapel in Windsor. Queen Elizabeth's grandson, the fifth in line to the throne, and Markle, who stars in the TV legal drama "Suits," announced their engagement in November. Given the international curiosity about the high-profile couple, the nuptials are sure to be a topic of interest come spring.

ALL PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

SOCCER: 2018 FIFA WORLD CUP

4 The 21st FIFA World Cup will take place in Russia from June 14 to July 15. Eleven cities will host a total of 64 matches in the tournament that's held every four years, with the final taking place at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow. For the first time since 1986, the United States Men's National Team will not be among the 32 teams competing after it had a shocking 2-1 loss to Trinidad & Tobago in October.

BILL COSBY'S SEX ASSAULT TRIAL

5 With a recent shift in empowerment against sexual assault, all eyes will likely be on the trial of disgraced comedian Bill Cosby. The high-profile proceedings are set to kick off on April 2, in Norristown, Pennsylvania. Cosby's first sexual assault trial ended in a mistrial in June 2017 after a jury failed to reach a unanimous verdict after deliberating more than 50 hours. The 80-year-old

entertainer is accused of drugging and sexually assaulting Andrea Constand, a former administrator with the women's basketball team at his alma mater, Temple University, in 2004.

Therapist talks hardships of 2017 and how to manage expectations for the new year

Americans reported an increase in anxiety throughout 2017 under President Donald Trump. Therapist William Doherty specifically started a movement to help others address this.

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If 2017 was a hard year for you, you weren't alone. Plenty of people talked about how their anxiety spiked because of political news and polls.

Metro spoke with William Doherty, a licensed psychologist, professor in the Department of Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota and the founder of Citizen Therapists for Democracy, an association of therapists focused on helping people keep their emotional balance "during the Trump era and beyond."

We've heard a lot about how this year has been hard for people because of political situations. Is that true in your experience as a therapist?
Oh yeah. I've been practicing for 40 years, and I've never seen anything like this, and the poll data support that — that Americans are more anxious about our country, and [politics] is affecting people in their personal lives and affecting relationships.

You specifically reached out to other therapists about what their role is in the Trump Era. Can you explain that?
I started an organization called Citizen Therapists for Democracy after the election because of what I was seeing, and I also co-founded an organization called Better Angels, which is doing polarization workshops around the country for what we call "reds" and "blues." Therapists are in the business of helping people deal with stress, anxiety, depression and relationship problems. It's just that we didn't pay much attention to what I call "public stress" and "political stress," maybe because lots of people weren't presenting with that, but now they are.

What were some of the biggest challenges that people faced in 2017?
One of them is problems in friendships and family relationships over political differences, that tends to spike at times like Thanksgiving and Christmas, with people making decisions about whether to even be with family, and then how to handle themselves, if they are a blue in a sea of reds, or vice versa. Another is with the sexual harassment stuff — that is triggering memories and experiences in a lot of women, and so that's been spiking since the Weinstein thing.

Looking ahead to 2018, William Doherty shared advice on how to handle politics-related stresses. PROVIDED

What are some ways people can cope with these stressors?
One is what we call buffering coping: How do you protect yourself from overexposure to this stress? If Trump's tweets spike your blood pressure, you don't have to read his tweets, you don't have to follow him on Twitter. Similarly, if you're a conservative, you don't have to watch MSNBC to get yourself angry. You can limit unnecessary exposure.

The other is active coping, where you do things in your life that you feel good about and feel could contribute to the common good. You can be volunteering somewhere; it doesn't have to be just political action. The way I think of it is: What can you do to enact your values in the world? That's a way to think about being somebody who contributes, not just somebody who is passibly trying to fend off all the stress that comes at you.

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Philly leaders look ahead to 2018

Philadelphia VIPs have an optimistic outlook for the coming year.

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Otis Bullock, executive director of Diversified Community Services in Point Breeze, shared his goals for 2018 with Metro.
PROVIDED

The New Year is finally here. What is Philadelphia looking forward to? Read on to learn what some local leaders hope for the new year, remember from the last year, and muse on as possibilities for the city's future.

Otis Bullock, executive director of Diversified Community Services in Point Breeze, spoke with Metro about the upcoming year and what he hopes for 2018.

What is your greatest wish for 2018?
Otis Bullock: My greatest wish for 2018 is for every child to be properly educated and prepared to thrive as an adult, regardless of their zip code.

What do you hope will happen in 2018?
I hope to see the city of Philadelphia renew its commitment to comprehensively reducing the city's poverty rate and reducing the homelessness epidemic in the city.

What are you planning to accomplish in 2018?
I hope to expand my own impact on reducing generational poverty and developing the next generation of leaders in the Philadelphia region.

Do you have any thoughts on 2017 and how it went?
2017 was full of ups and downs for our great city. We watched Mayor [Jim] Kenney take bold steps to provide quality pre-K for more than 2,000 low-income children and take back local control of the Philadelphia School District. However, we also saw the murder rate rise about 22 percent. I would like to see a comprehensive plan to give our most vulnerable citizens hope for a better future.

What would you tell others moving into the new year?
Build upon your past successes, learn from your past failures, and use both to grow into a better person than you were before.

Other local Philadelphia leaders revealed their wishes for 2018 to Metro.

SEPTA general manager Jeffrey Knueppel: "Lots of new buses and locomotives under my Christmas tree will make 2018 better for our customers!"

Mayor Jim Kenney: "I wish that we acknowledge that we are a diverse nation again, and not one that is run solely by rich, white men."

Departing City Controller Alan Butkovitz: "My thought of 2017 is, to paraphrase Dierks Bentley, 'They knew what they were feeling, but what were they thinking?'"

314
314 HOMICIDES WERE REPORTED IN 2017, AS OF PRESS TIME, THE MOST SINCE 2012 WHEN THERE WERE 329 HOMICIDES.

Notable stats from 2017:
The ongoing opioid epidemic was responsible for a quarter more deaths in 2017 than in 2016: some 1,250 overdoses, at least 85 percent from opioids, with 70 of those occurring within the last 30 days.

Philly saw the most homicides since 2012, the year the city first reached historic lows: at least 314 murders were reported in 2017 as of press-time. There were 329 in 2012.

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Find your way to 'Shine' with new well-being app

Now more than ever, it's important to prioritize our emotional well-being, Shine's co-founders Naomi Hirabayashi and Marah Lidey say.

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When Shine launched its motivational well-being app in early December, it installed bright yellow benches in high-stress areas of New York City to let people try out its content. SHINE

People often look to improve themselves at the dawn of a new year, and after the chaotic 2017 many of us had, 2018 may need to be a Year of Well-Being.

If self-care is one of your resolutions, millennial-minded wellness brand Shine launched a new app that includes mindfulness motivation, interactive audio content, like conversational "Mindful Moments," and a chatbot expanding on its daily motivational texts.

Shine co-founders Naomi Hirabayashi and Marah Lidey, who was named one of Forbes' "30 under 30" for consumer technology this year, told Metro about Shine's growth from a text for 50 people to currently having more than one million users, if it works for non-millennials and how they decompress beyond technology.

Metro: How did the Shine app come about?

Naomi Hirabayashi & Marah Lidey: With our community's feedback and our attention to how much the world has changed in the past year, we realized the important opportunity we have to provide more ways for people to integrate self-care into their routine. The app gives users a deeper experience to work on their well-being and leverages audio content that brings the Shine voice to life.

This time of year can be stressful. Did that play into the launch timing?

It can feel difficult to carve out time to take care of yourself, and it's especially difficult during the holidays. Plus, between political drama, record-breaking natural disasters and a heightened climate of sexual assault awareness, 2017 has been a rough year, and Americans' well-being is on the decline. Now more than ever, it's important to prioritize our emotional well-being.

Tell me about Mindful Moments.

Other meditation apps felt too crunchy, not like the way we would talk to our friends about what's going on in our life. Shine's Mindful Moments are written the way we would talk to each other, voiced by wellness influencers we follow and in a first-of-its-kind interactive format. You can listen to Mindful Moments around topics like "Nix That Inner Critic" or "Help, I Have a Toxic Friend," and interact with the app to get meditations that relate to what you're dealing with.

Shine is very focused on millennials. Can other generations of people benefit from its content as well?

All of the research around millennials and well-being shows that the biggest difference between us and previous generations is that we view well-being as a habit versus a trend. And as a result, we want solutions that keep up with our well-being at the rate in which we're thinking about it — all the time. And while the "on-the-go" value to Shine resonates deeply with our generation, the issues we address are issues people experience across generations.

How do you two decompress beyond technology?

We're both big readers — it's the perfect way to decompress and getting just six minutes of reading in is enough to help your stress level go down.

The Shine app is available on iOS for $4.99 per month (when billed for $59.99 up front) or $7.99 per month if billed monthly.

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Philly wellness gurus offer tips on keeping those New Year's resolutions

Let 2018 be the year you make it happen!

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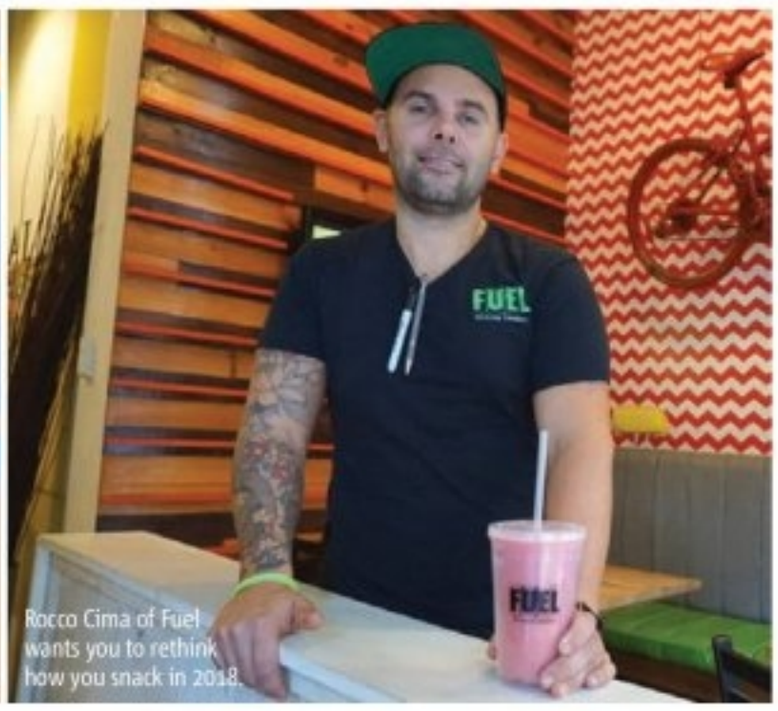
Jen Crompton of Fuel Cycle Fitness advises to not go it alone. ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED



Rocco Cima of Fuel wants you to rethink how you snack in 2018.

Many people make New Year's resolutions to get into shape but very few actually stick to those resolutions as the year ticks on by, thanks to busy schedules, discouragement and excuses. Instead of pushing off your fitness goals to 2019, some of Philly's finest wellness gurus have given us tips on keeping those New Year's resolutions all year long.

From changing up the way you snack to finding a friend to workout with, lifestyle changes implemented consistently over time are the way to go.

1 Be mindful

Penny Ordway, owner of Eviama Life Spa, believes the right mindset is the first step in achieving your fitness goals.

"Move through your day in awareness — some things not so good, some things exceptional — but at the end of the day, ask yourself 'What was my best moment?' Embracing this practice can rewire you and have you looking for (and attracting) all the really good moments!"

2 Try something new

Bored of spending your precious time watching cable news on an elliptical machine at the gym? Maybe you should change up your fitness routine and join the circus, at least for a class. "There's no better way to break out of a rut, feel younger, and feel optimistic about the future. Get out of the office, get off the couch and go try a class," says Shana Kennedy, executive director of Philadelphia School Of Circus Arts and Circadium School of Contemporary Circus.

3 Find someone to hold you accountable

"It's always easier to stick to a goal when you have someone pushing you," says Jen Crompton, owner and fitness instructor at Fuel Cycle Fitness. "When it comes to focusing on becoming healthier, find a partner who will join you for meal prep sessions or workouts. Use each other as motivation, and when one of you wants to jump ship, the other can be the life preserver."

4 Rethink snacking

There's nothing wrong with snacking throughout the day, as long as you're making healthy choices. "I'm a big fan of apples and organic almond butter for when I want something sweet," says Rocco Cima, CEO of the Fuel restaurant franchise. "A good turkey jerky is good for when you want something savory. There's so many good alternative that make the 'chip' boring now."

5 Summer bodies start in winter

Rocking a hot beach body in the summertime doesn't magically happen in the time it took for you to swap out your winter sweaters for T-shirts. Embrace the journey of getting into a regular fitness routine."The more time you put in the workout room, the more you get out of life. We strengthen our bodies, clear our minds and boost our energy," says Taylor Popple, owner of the Orangetheory Fitness franchise.

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WHAT WILL PHILLY SPORTS LOOK LIKE IN 2018?

THE SPORTS PROFESSOR

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With a bye and home-field advantage, how far can the Eagles and their inconsistent defense go in the playoffs? GETTY IMAGES

Here's a toast to 2017. All four of our pro teams look better as the year ends than they did when it started. And we enter January with realistic hopes that the Eagles can go to the Super Bowl — yes, even with a backup QB.

So let's look ahead. Here's my vision of Philadelphia sports in 2018 if, just for once, everything manages to go right.

Eagles

Well, this is obvious. Ride that home-field advantage to playoff wins over the Saints (or Falcons) and Vikings — dome teams that will shrink in the January chill of South Philly. Then head to Minneapolis for revenge (13 seasons later) over Bill Belichick and the Patriots.

The Eagles win that elusive Lombardi Trophy by running Jay Ajayi and former Pat LeGarrette Blount 30 times. Nick Foles becomes the modern-day Jeff Hostetler — a backup QB leading his team to a Super Bowl title.

After the season, Carson Wentz rehabs and springs back to pre-injury form. The Eagles survive the poaching of coaches and free agents that inevitably scavenge elite teams. And the first-round pick is invested in some huge side of beef (Mike McGlinchey, Orlando Brown) to replace Jason Peters at LT.

Realistic chances of this occurring: I honestly think the Eagles will get to Super Bowl LII. Win it? Well ...

Wentz is young and strong enough to bounce back just fine. I expect, however, that defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz and QB coach John DeFilippo will be carrying clipboards elsewhere next season.

See page 8 for Macnow's thoughts on the other three Philly teams ...

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Philly sports in 2018 continued from page 7

Sixers

Making the playoffs is a must. Winning a round this season? Too much to dream for.

Three things are critical: Ben Simmons needs to develop a jump shot to compliment the rest of his outstanding game. Markelle Fultz must debut (mid-January?) and prove to be a consistent pull-up shooter. And Joel Embiid must stay healthy — and continue to be the most-fun athlete in America.

Oh, and Brett Brown still must show he can draw up plays to win the close games. Much as we all love the coach, those nail-biters always seem to go against the Sixers.

In the off-season, the Sixers need to add just one player. Lebron James.

Realistic chances: James is a pipe dream, of course, but I have confidence in all the rest. Except, perhaps, for the part about Fultz debuting in January.

Phillies

The Next Generation moves in. Rhys Hoskins hits 35 homers, Nick Williams drives in 90 and Jorge Alfaro guns down runners and sends rockets over the CBP fences. J.P. Crawford takes over at SS and fields, well, 90 percent as well as Freddy Galvis. Veteran free agent Carlos Santana puts up a .365 OBP and becomes a fan favorite by playing walkup music of his namesake.

Will Joel Embiid stay healthy enough to get the 76ers into the playoffs? GETTY IMAGES

Either Maikel Franco or Odubel Herrera gets traded for a solid No. 2 starter — and whichever one remains stops confounding Phillies fans with inconsistent play. Aaron Nola throws 200 solid innings and makes the All-Star Game. Somewhere from the jumble of prospects and injured vets a reliable 3rd starter is found.

And Gabe Kapler, the most out-of-the-box hire to run a team in this town since a QB coach named Andy Reid was handed the Eagles in 1999, proves to be not just another pretty face.

Realistic chances: I'm likely too hopeful about the kids, because baseball prospects are so iffy. And, while I believe in Nola, I have no blessed idea where the other pitching is coming from.

Flyers

It's optimistic to think they even make the playoffs this season, let alone win a round. But Claude Giroux is back to top-caliber form and Jakub Voracek is on pace for 80 assists. Ivan Provorov continues to justify belief that he may become the top defenseman in the NHL.

Things will work if goalie Brian Elliott plays as well in May as he has in December. And while GM Ron Hextall keeps preaching patience, some of his bus-full of prospects have to start excelling at the NHL level. Thus far, the hype has exceeded the reality.

Realistic chances: I like many of the Flyers pieces. But all the stats on puck possession, power play and penalty kill suggest something's lacking from this team.

And I've got doubts about coach Dave Hakstol. The Flyers system doesn't suit their personnel and, sad to say, they're boring to watch. Of all four local teams, the Flyers are the ones who I expect the most change in 2018.

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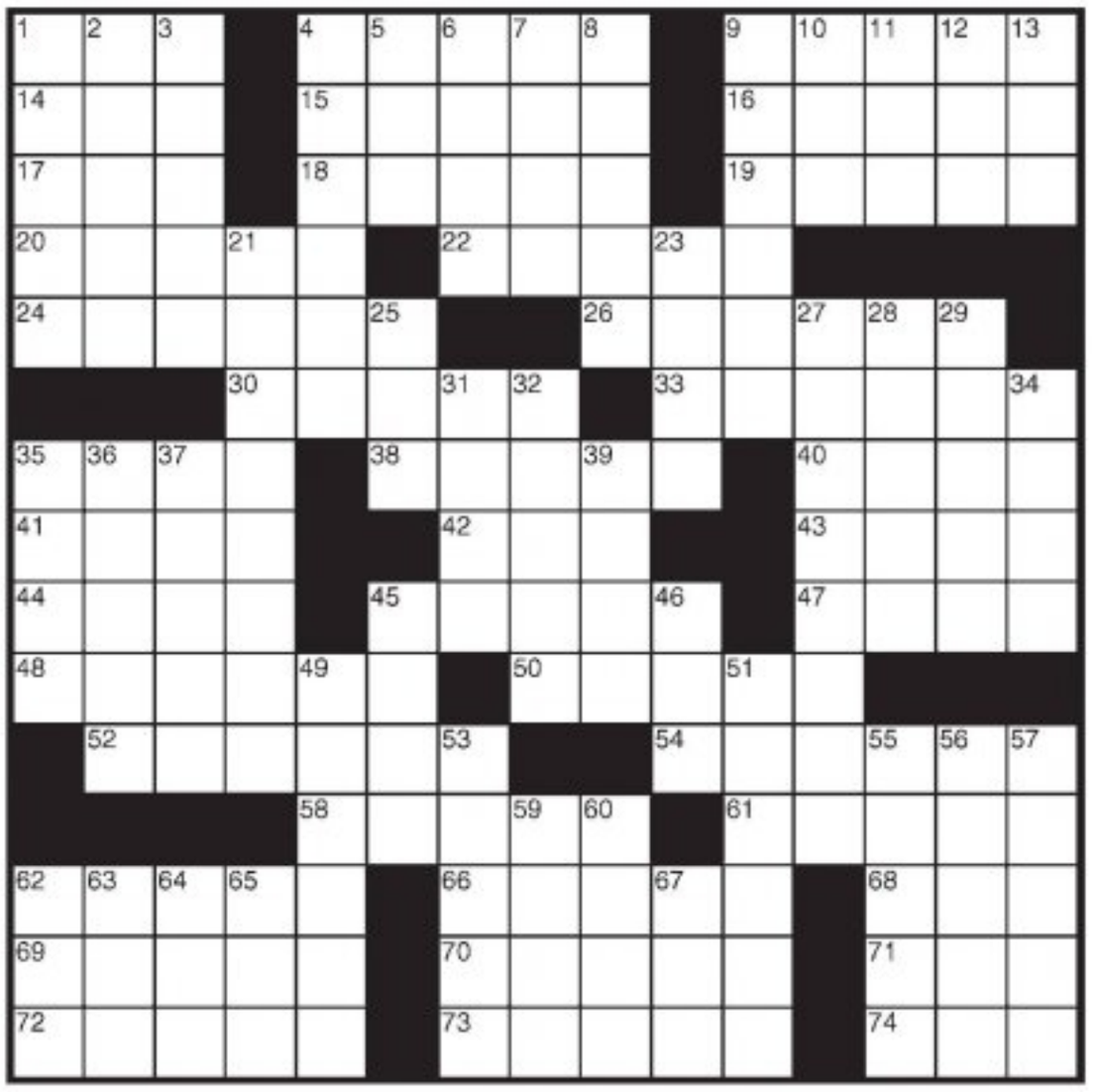
Across
1 Promising
4 Braces
9 Den dwellers
14 Beads on grass
15 Artificial person
16 Chemical compound
17 Lunched
18 More slippery
19 Sleeps in a tent
20 Getups
22 Punch or kiss
24 Texas border town (2 wds.)
26 Cries of glee
30 Bike or trike
33 Foment
35 Fix a shirttail
38 Harmful
40 Familiar with (2 wds.)
41 Nile wader
42 Ad – (wing it)
43 Furnish
44 Links cry
45 Hotel employee
47 Caesar's worst day
48 Building exterior
50 Board mems.
52 Spuds
54 Goes by car
58 Crusted over
61 Portfolio item
62 Poisonous snake
66 Tailors' needs
68 Ottoman title
69 Pentium producer
70 Boat crane
71 Relatives
72 Carries on
73 Makes a move
74 Get nosy

Down
1 Platitude
2 Flower part
3 Punk
4 Victorian
5 Fabled bird
6 Kyoto sashes
7 Jingle or limerick
8 Scarecrow stuffing
9 Gesture
10 That senora
11 Cash dispenser (abbr.)
12 House mem.
13 Almost-grads
21 Kind of driver
23 Elegant
25 Libras' mo.
27 Eye doctors
28 -- up (spoke)
29 Cherry center
31 Montez or Falana
32 Banish
34 Concludes
35 Spat
36 "Das Boot" craft (hyph.)
37 About that time
39 Wild goat
45 Flo's coworker
46 Speaker pro --
49 Window stickers
51 Glides
53 Slips sideways
55 Major Japanese port
56 Host -- Philbin
57 Reeked
59 Latin 101 word
60 Symbol of peace
62 Cosmonaut's lab
63 Literary collection
64 Atlas abbr.
65 Wager
67 Pinch off



metro.us/sudoku

easy

4		2		5	8	6		3
	7	6	2					
3				1			2	
		4					5	
			8	7	9			
	9					3		
	4			2				6
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9		7	4	3		8		5

hard

					9		7	
1			2		8	9	6	
		9				2		
7				9	1	8		
9		1				6		3
		3	6	5				9
		5				1		
	7	2	1		4			8
	1		9					

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Expect to face inevitable changes at home or within your inner circle. Remain silent unless you have something worthwhile to contribute. Protect against ill health.

Taurus Positive changes at home will bring you closer to the ones you love. Personal relationships and plans that will encourage greater togetherness are encouraged.

Gemini Snap decisions, actions or purchases will not turn out as planned. Don't be deceived by a smooth talker or unrealistic advertising. Stick to what you know you.

Cancer Apply a gentle nudge if someone is hesitant to get involved in your plans. An incentive you offer will help give you something to look forward to.

Leo Someone may try to push you to get involved in something that probably isn't a good fit for you. Walk away from anyone using emotional or manipulative tactics.

Virgo Get involved in life. Take a short trip or do something that is conducive to socializing and meeting new people. Expand your circle of friends.

Libra You'll be faced with emotional decisions that can cause a disruption at home or when dealing with loved ones. Stay calm and don't make a move until you are ready.

Scorpio Plan your next vacation or project. Signing up for a course or engaging in events that will help you gain experience and new connections is encouraged.

Sagittarius Hold on to your possessions. Don't share information that might put you in a vulnerable position. Trust in yourself when dealing with money and negotiations.

Capricorn Spend time with someone you love. Personal changes will turn out well and inspire you to be bold in your personal and social interactions.

Aquarius Expand your interests. Sign up for something that will add to your skills or qualifications to raise your standard of living.

Pisces Working on the goals you have set for the upcoming year are all featured. A plan that will encourage personal investments will prove intriguing. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

B	A	L	D		C	R	E	P	T		A	L	E	C
O	B	I	E		E	A	G	E	R		M	E	N	U
B	E	A	T		M	E	A	T	Y		N	O	I	R
S	T	R	O	B	E		D	E	S	C	E	N	D	S
			U	R	N	S		R	T	E	S			
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H	A	N	D	S		A	P	R	I	L		B	E	E
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O	G	E	E		U	L	T	R	A		T	E	A	M
P	E	S	T		S	T	A	I	N		S	A	P	S

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